



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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Former George Washington University Professor pleads guilty **to embezzling more than \$900,000 from federally funded** **programs**

Washington, D.C.— United States Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein, Kenneth M. Mead, Inspector General of the United States Department of Transportation, and Michael A. Mason, Assistant Director in Charge of the Washington Field Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation, announced that Nabih E. Bedewi, 41, of Reston, Virginia, pleaded guilty today in U.S. District Court before the Honorable Richard Roberts to theft concerning programs receiving federal funds. Sentencing is set for June 29, 2005. The plea agreement between Bedewi and the Government provides for a sentencing range of 37 to 46 months in prison.

Bedewi, who was a tenured professor in George Washington University's School of Engineering and Applied Science and Director of the George Washington University National Crash Analysis Center (NCAC), a research and resource center for transportation safety studies on vehicles and highways, headquartered in Ashburn, Virginia, which receives approximately 80 percent of its funding from the Federal Highway Administration and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, caused the NCAC to pay approximately \$991,909.31 in fraudulent transactions, including charges from ITSC, EBI and NGM, entities that Bedewi had an ownership interest in and/or controlled and for fraudulent

stipend and tuition payments. As part of the scheme which lasted from approximately April 2000 to July 2004, Bedewi caused to be submitted and approved for payment invoices containing fictitious labor, equipment and consulting expenses and made false representations to establish unauthorized graduate student stipends and a tuition scholarship for spouses of George Washington University employees. NCAC expenses are routinely subject to reimbursement by the Federal Highway Administration and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as part of the Federal funding of NCAC's activities. Many of Bedewi's fraudulent transactions were subject to reimbursement, resulting in losses to the Federal government and George Washington University/NCAC totaling approximately \$991,909.31.

Department of Transportation Inspector General Kenneth M. Mead stated that stewardship of taxpayer dollars is a top Departmental priority: "Because the demand for federal highway safety funds is greater than available resources, we need to ensure that every dollar is being spent well and as intended. We will take swift action against anyone who seeks to defraud our transportation programs by unlawfully diverting public funds for private gain." Mr. Mead acknowledged the University's role in voluntarily disclosing this diversion and agreeing to work with FHWA to enhance grant oversight.

In announcing today's guilty plea, United States Attorney Wainstein, Inspector General Mead and Assistant Director in Charge Mason commended Special Agents Michael Pugliese and Kevin Durkin of the Department of Transportation Inspector General's Office, Special Agents Kimberly Alaniz and Perry Goerish of the FBI, legal assistant Teesha Tobias and Assistant United States Attorneys John Griffith and Kimberley Knowles.

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